

Message Text

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INFO ALL CONSULATES IN MEXICO

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 5226

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SEDU PINT MX

SUBJECT: THREAT OF GENERAL STRIKE AT NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

1. SUMMARY: A LABOR DISPUTE BETWEEN A RECENTLY FORMED UNION (SPAUNAM) OF FACULTY MEMBERS OF THE MEXICAN NATIONAL AUTONOMOUS UNIVERSITY (UNAM) AND THE UNAM ADMINISTRATION THREATENS TO RESULT IN A GENERAL STRIKE ON JUNE 16. STRIKE WOULD RUN SOME RISK OF VIOLENCE WHEN THE INTERNATIONAL WOMENS' YEAR CONFERENCE (WCIWY) WILL HAVE UP TO TEN THOUSAND FOREIGN VISITORS IN MEXICO CITY. TIMING OF STRIKE TO COINCIDE WITH CONFERENCE MAY BE INTENDED TO STRENGTHEN SPAUNAM HAND RATHER THAN TO EMBARRASS OR TO SEEK CONFRONTATION PER SE. CHIEF LOSER IF STRIKE SHOULD PRODUCE UNSEEMLY SPECTACLE FOR VISITORS WOULD BE SECRETARY OF GOVERNMENT MOYA PALENCIA, LEADING PRESIDENTIAL ASPIRANT. END SUMMARY.

2. THE UNION OF ACADEMIC PERSONNEL OF THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY WAS FORMED IN MID-1974 AND NOW CLAIMS 5,000 OF UNAM'S 18,000 TEACHERS AS MEMBERS. STRENGTH PROBABLY EVEN GREATER SINCE MANY OF THE 13,000 NON-MEMBERS ARE PART TIME INSTRUCTORS, WHERE-AS MOST OF SPAUNAM MEMBERSHIP ARE FULL TIME.

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3. KEY SPAUNAM DEMANDS ARE 40 PERCENT WAGE INCREASE AND

COLLECTIVE CONTRACT FOR ALL ACADEMIC PERSONNEL. ISSUE OF REPRESENTATION OF ACADEMIC PERSONNEL AND FORMAL RECOGNITION AS LABOR UNION (PROHIBITED BY UNAM LEGISLATION) ALSO INVOLVED. 40 PERCENT INCREASE WOULD REQUIRE 32 MILLION DOLLARS; UNAM SAYS IT HAS ONLY 9.6 MILLION, OR 16 PERCENT. DISCUSSIONS BROKE DOWN JUNE 10 AND SPAUNAM HAS CALLED FOR GENERAL STRIKE TO BEGIN JUNE 16. ALTHOUGH OTHER ASSOCIATIONS OF ACADEMIC PERSONNEL OPPOSE SPAUNAM, ONE DAY STRIKES IN PAST TWO WEEKS DEMONSTRATED SPAUNAM HAS SUPPORT TO STOP NORMAL UNIVERSITY ACTIVITY.

4. DIVERSITYUOF SUPPORT FOR SPAUNAM (BOTH LEFT AND RIGHT WING STUDENT GROUPS HAVE PARTICIPATED IN ONE DAY STRIKES) PROBABLY INDICATES VARIOUS MOTIVES TEMPORARILY CONVERGING IN AGREEMENT ON TACTICS. THERE HAS NOT YET BEEN ANY INDICATION THAT CONFRONTATION PER SE WITH GOM IS GOAL. TIMING OF STRIKE TO COINCIDE WITH ARRIVAL OF UP TO TEN THOUSAND VISITORS FOR WCIWY IS PROBABLY INTENDED TO STRENGTHEN SPAUNAM HAND AND TO MAKE ANY USE OF FORCE BY GOM MORE EMBARRASSING THAN IT WOULD BE OTHERWISE.

5. PRESIDENTIAL POLITICS COULD ALSO BE AFFECTED. UNAM RECTOR GUILLERMO SOBERON'S TOUGH POLICIES (IN AUGUST 1973 HE BROUGHT FEDERAL POLICE ONTO CAMPUS TO BREAK UP STUDENT GANGS) ARE ONE OBVIOUS TEST OF SPAUNAM. SOBERON'S IS GENERALLY THOUGHT TO BE A POLITICAL ASSOCIATE OF GOVERNMENT SECRETARY MOYA PALENCIA, THE LEADING PRESIDENTIAL ASPIRANT. IF STRIKE SHOULD PRODUCE UNSEEMLY SPECTACLE FOR WCIWY, MOYA WOULD ALSO BE AFFECTED SINCE GOM WCIWY CHAIRMAN IS ATTORNEY GENERAL OJEDA PAULLADA, ONE OF MOYA'S CLOSEST ALLIES. IF FORCE WERE TO BE USED BY GOM, MOYA THEN WOULD BE DIRECTLY INVOLVED AS SECRETARY OF GOVERNMENT (CHARGED WITH INTERNAL SECURITY).

6. GOM HAS BEEN NERVOUS ABOUT SECURITY FOR WCIWY FOR SOME TIME. KNOWLEDGEABLE OFFICIAL TOLD AMBASSADOR JOVA JUNE 12 THAT GOM WILL INTRODUCE WOMEN SECURITY OFFICERS INTO CONFERENCE. JOVA

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